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Action

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Info

FROM: Caracas

SS TO: Secretary of State

G NO: 500, October 23, 6 p.m.

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SAL DEPARTMENT PASS ARMY, NAVY, AIR, POLAD CINCARIB, POLAD CINCLANT
CAPEUR Vast majority Venezuelans appear wholeheartedly back President
IO Betancourt's strong support US initiative on Cuba. WhileDAC -- there some minor demonstrations this morning at Central
P University, city as whole has had "business as usual" atmos-
USIA phere. Embassy (and other USG installations) continue under
NSC reinforced guard. Consulate Maracaibo reported this morning
INR that city calm.
CIANSA President met with AD, COPEI, and CTV leaders this morning
OSD and with military this afternoon. Embassy has no report as
ARMY yet re results. Foreign Minister publicly supported US po-
NAVY sition in statement today.
AIRRMR Military all ranks and services "exuberant" and oft-stated
remark was "at last".AD leaders have told Embassy officers Kennedy speech was "very
good", "magnificent" and that 90 percent Venezuelans pleased
with it. One AD Senator on own initiative called Embassy
officer to state extreme left contact had expressed knowledge
of hemisphere wide Communist party all out attack on US in-
terests "when signal given" and claimed there no nuclear
weapons on Cuba yet but that Soviet convoy now on way with
them.Cuban exile leaders unanimous in their "glee" over US program
exile radio station has been broadcasting speech continuously
all day. Several exile leaders have already left for meeting

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-2- 500, October 23, 6 p.m. from Caracas

with Miami Council.

Embassy telephone operator has received considerable number calls, all but five of which were laudatory.

Armed forces not on alert and no plans do so unless local situation requires. (They have just been restored normal duty status following two weeks partial and full alert.)

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